The Polemics of Digital Literature in Indonesia

Trends, Patterns, and Approaches within Academic Discussion

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Abstract—The massive use of information technology in some cities in Indonesia has caused the emergence of new phenomenon in the field of literature. Literary medium which previously was dominated by print has gradually shifted to digital media. The emergence of literary works written and published directly in digital media either in internet or social media has encouraged a new form of sensibility within Indonesian literary world. The phenomenon has attracted some literary scholars to scrutinize the continuity of digital literature. However, the dynamic of digital literature has lack of serious attention from scholars or academicians. This paper describes the trends and polemics within academic discussion on digital literature. By using google scholars search engine, journals database, and online university library resources, the paper identified trends, pattern, and approaches in analyzing digital literature. This paper argues that studies on digital literature in Indonesia is shackled on the polemic of quality and its emergence in contemporary Indonesia.

Keywords—Indonesian literature; digital literature; digital media; internet; polemics

I. INTRODUCTION

Current Indonesian literary studies deal with a new challenge of information technology, particularly internet media. After the New Order regime collapsed and the Reformation era came to replace the leadership of Suharto, digital media flourished to form a new sensibility for Indonesian society. It is not only for enjoying entertainment through television, CD / VCD, and the internet, but also for reading and publishing literary works through digital media. This new sensibility manifests in the behavior of a new generation of literary writers and readers who can easily read, write, copy, share and comment on literature freely almost without any boundaries. Such behavior is increasingly massive with the presence of social media such as Facebook and Twitter. This new phenomena in the world of literature necessitate a new methodology and approach which is different from previous conventional approach of studying print literature.

Some literary researchers believe that the presence of literature in cyberspace like internet has created a new genre that marks contemporary cultural products as well as forming new horizons. The consequence of this is the need for another formulation in the stage of scrutinizing published literary works while receiving a reception in the digital world. Hayles argues that both print and electronic texts have been deeply permeated by codes [1]. The difference is, digital text cannot be accessed before it is displayed by other media such as screens or PC computers. However, digital text displays hypertext and can be interactive as non-static as printed texts. The important of new approach in the new literary media also, following the opinion of Landow, can be seen as unnatural in the beginning as the beginning of the emergence of print literature in oral or oral society in the past [2].

A recent phenomenon emerged in the midst of Indonesian society is the dominance of digital media in the field of literature where prose and especially poetry are often read digitally. The internet has become dominant in accessing literary works either through mailing lists, blogs, pages, or social media Facebook, Instagram, Wattpad and Twitter. In the early 2000s, literary mailing lists sprang up, such as poet@yahoogroups.com, puisikita@yahoogroups.com, and buminmanusia@yahoogroups.com which had turned to literary pages such as cybersastra.org, fordisastra.com, mediasastra.com, and sastradigital.org. What is more amazing is the literature on social media such as ‘fiksimimi’ (mini-fiction) and the personal accounts of poets. For example, Agus Noor (@agus_noor) who has 49,800 followers, Gus Mus who has 470,000 followers, and Faruk who has 4,955 likes and followers often publish poems that many followers like and comment on. The rhymes posted have been produced and published digitally without involving the printing process. In fact, a sociologist who intentionally produced digital poems about anti-corruption, namely Imam B. Prasojo who has 12,396 followers often publish against anti-corruption [3].

The passion of digital literature shows how the new sense have formed in the minds of Indonesia's young generation. In the meantime, it is unfortunate, the study of digital literary growth and development is still counted very minimal fingers. The empirical fact of using the internet as a digital media since the early 2000s ideally has attracted scholars to explore the phenomenon of this new accessibility, especially in the field of literature. Suraja began an academic study of the emergence of new media literature, namely the reproduction of anthology of poetry compiled on a CD ROM, not a book. Suraja's research confirms that digital poetry creates text more vividly and avoids excessive interpretation because text is limited by color, vivid images, and sound [4]. At the very least, this study...
answers hundreds of essays and other types of literary criticism written in a reflective manner, not based on scientific and academic stages. In a field that is not much different, Arndt Graf examines the perception of the world community on the internet of the literary work of Pramoedya Ananta Toer. Graf's research reveals the most popular Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novels and the most frequently accessed works on the internet based on the language where English works are more and reaches 66 percent while Indonesian ones are only 24.7 percent [5].

In the academic discourse, Indonesian literary studies mediated by digital media are in fact still not widely observed to understand the dynamics of research on digital literature. In fact, these dynamics can contribute to the continuity and change of Indonesian literature both in the domain of criticism and history. Based on this reason, this paper seeks to present a picture of the dynamics of the study of digital literature in Indonesia. The description presented here has been compiled through quantitative stages that track primary sources through google scholar, university libraries, worldcat, and journal database such as ISI Knowledge, Scopus, Garuda Portal, Proquest, and ISTOR from 2000 to 2016. For the limitation of the data sources, the data set is sorted based on the scope of the publication (journals and scientific works) and the methodology applied in the process of writing the work.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW
A. Academic works on digital Indonesian literature

When scholars and critics look at literature in the form of digital or non-printed media, they often juxtapose it within print framework. When tracing it deeper, what is stated by Roland Barthes said that the text is a network metaphor, "the metaphor of the Text is that of the Network"[6]. Text cannot be understood in a limited way. Text is also not just writing in a book. Literary works that are loaded with text can be accessed through various media such as books and computer screens. Departing from here literary texts can manifest themselves in a variety of media such as the internet that displays images and sounds. This was explored by Hayles with confidence in the term electronic literature which has a unique character and requires a non-conventional methodology to examine it [1].

The study of the emergence of new media literary texts has received much attention from observers through a number of academic writings. Some researchers have believed this as a new genre in art which is a product of contemporary world culture as well as a new horizon. Some others prefer to discuss literature in the new media as evidence of a new form of literature. In studies as academic works in the form of dissertations, there are many analyses of digital literary phenomena with cases in certain countries, some explore through new approaches, and the need to look at the intrinsic aspects of digital literature. Those studies, unfortunately, do not discuss the dynamics of contemporary Indonesian literature the object of study material.

In Indonesia, academic studies on the dynamics of modern Indonesian literature pay more attention to political and ideological issues both by Indonesian and foreign scholars. The concentration of the study also focuses more on print works that are already established both in general recognition and scholarship. As for literary works that use new mediums such as the internet or other electronics have not received significant response in the realm of scholarship in Indonesia. The attention of foreign scholars to the dynamics of non-printed literature also did not appear much in the academic debate of contemporary Indonesian literature. Nevertheless, there are still some academics who write studies of digital Indonesian literature both to obtain academic degrees and as a contribution to the current Indonesian literary debate.

We could say that the study of Suraja on the reproduction of the anthology of digital poetry cyberpuitika has initiated the debate on digital literature in Indonesia in the world of scholarship [4]. Furthermore, based on data traced through google scholar, university libraries, worldcat, and journal databases, Arndt Graf's article about virtual receptions (internet) on Pramoedya Ananta Toer's literary works adds to the scope of digital literary discourse. Some other academic works show important efforts in knitting an understanding of digital literature that is increasingly growing in the midst of society.

Responding to the polemic about the form and format of literature provided by the internet, Fajar Setiawan Roekminto conducted a reflective study of the inevitability of internet literature. Roekminto regrets the debate about the measurement of the quality of internet literature which measures from the perspective of print literature [7]. For him, internet literature should be understood in the context of changing times that are impossible to avoid. Critics' attention needs to be directed to the search for formats and forms that manifest in internet literature, not to judge the existence of cyber literature as unqualified and cheap literature. The lack of quality literature, the limitations of literary critics who are reliable, the lack of teaching literature in schools, and the apathy of public attention have accumulated to encourage polemic of non-constructive cyber literature.

Several similar reflective writings that highlight the inevitability of the presence of cyber literature also reinforce the shift in literary media from print to digital. Laily Fitriyani considers the presence of cyber literature to open up opportunities for novice writers to gain space in the actualization of their work [8]. This new style also suggests inclusiveness in the literary world which is usually dominated by certain groups. Not much different, Arif Hidayat argues that cyber literature is an alternative for writers who are marginalized from the mainstream print media. The issue of the quality of cyber literature will depend on the contents of the packaged not on a free internet media without filtering as tight as the print media selection of newspapers or books [9]. The reflection of other scholar is also in line with Hidayat by emphasizing the openness of the literary world in dealing with cyber literature so as not to stutter in understanding the current reality.

An in-depth study that tried to approach the presence of digital literature both in the context of Indonesia's literary history, methodology, and paradigms that need to be used to understand it has been rolled out by Faruk. By using the term
multimedia literature, Faruk bases his reading on multimedia literature on postmodern logic which places literary works as open and coextensive texts with something outside of themselves, not closed, final, and separate texts with social, pragmatic, and contextual contexts. The technological context. Departing from the lack of existing academic work, an important issue for Faruk is the urgency of methodological exploration of the phenomenon of postmodernism literary works born of multimedia sensibility as digital literature. One method that might be used is the deconstruction method as formulated by Jonathan Culler in On Deconstruction [10]. Faruk's academic work has paved the way for the existence of digital literature as a new tendency for literature that allows it to be explored methodologically.

Several other studies have offered what was thought by previous reflective writings. We can examine, for example, the writings of Hadi Susanto, Katrin Bandel, Faruk HT, Kusmarwanti, Ratih Kartikasari, and Mohammad Rokib who approached the literary community and digital literary works through certain analyzes. That the text of a literary work is open and intersects with contexts outside of himself, this was examined by Bandel and Susanto through a review of literary works on the internet that received interactive responses from readers. In fact, characters in a novel can come out and sue the author [11]. Descriptive scope of digital literary works also presents an interactive communication between the writer and the reader who is very likely to bring up the clash [12].

Some of the academic studies above describe the dynamics in responding to the existence of digital literature in Indonesia. However, the study has yet to come up with a methodology offering in its entirety while providing an explanation of methodological implications in analyzing digital literary works. The discussion in the analysis of the work still tends to rely on the relationship of the text with interactive reader responses, the contextualization of literature with the world outside the text, and descriptions of the characteristics or content of a work. As an effort to map the dynamics of studies of digital literary works, it becomes important to map out trends and approaches present in academic work on digital literary works.

### III. TRENDS AND CONCERN IN ACADEMIC STUDY OF DIGITAL INDONESIAN LITERATURE

The trends and approaches referred to here are not merely looking at trends and theories used in analyzing digital literary works, but rather trying to understand simply the meaning that is implicitly decomposed in a variety of academic studies. Understanding trends will direct attention to the dominant tendencies on themes and issues examined by existing research on the presence of digital literature. The understanding of the approach can lead to the development of methodological implications used in researching digital literary works.

The tendency of academic studies on digital literary works can be traced through themes and issues in a work. This can be addressed through several elements of academic writing such as research questions, objectives, and the focus of the discussion raised at the beginning of the paper. For example, Cunong Nunuk Suraja's academic work entitled "The study of digital poetry reproduction in the anthology of Cyberpuhitka digital poetry" from the beginning had written the focus of the discussion which was also formulated in his research questions. He revealed that his research explored the process of reproduction of digital poetry and so on. Graf's writings also showed early on the different lists of perceptions of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's works on the internet. Also the work of Ratih Kartikasari which gave special attention to the description of aspects of society, authors, and literary works in the Fiksimimi community. By tracing the elements of themes and issues in an academic work, the assumptions of trends from studies of digital literary works in Indonesia can be formulated here.

When exploring the perspective or approach used by academic writings. Some works have explicitly revealed the approach used in understanding the issue or discussion. Some others do not bring it up but implicitly can be understood through detailed reading of academic studies. For example, Faruk mentions that his writing "phenomenological" in which the perspective is used to categorize comments on a digital literary website cybersastra.net. Kusmarwanti also gave rise to an approach used in examining the characteristics of cyber short stories through a structuralist approach, especially the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of Abrams's style. As for many other works that freely mention their writing with a descriptive approach as well as qualitative, although basically qualitative is not an approach or method but only type of data. In this way this paper seeks to see the approach of academic works on digital literature.

To produce a simple mapping of academic writing related to digital literature, this article divides elements of trends and approaches through a separate reading method. As stated above, the trends examined here have been seen through themes and issues in the text. While the approach is still needed as an element of its own while being strengthened by other markers. Thus, there are five simple elements to understand the dynamics of the study of digital literature, namely the elements of themes, issues, approaches, titles, and authors of research to present and complement the identity of an academic work. Below are some of the elements in question, which are framed in a table format to make it easier to read a dynamic.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
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<td>Polemics on the existence of digital literature</td>
<td>Debate and polemics</td>
<td>Descriptive historic</td>
<td>Telaah kritis eksisten sastra siber</td>
<td>Mushofa Kamal</td>
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<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Perluhatan dan Mungkinkah Sastra di Internet</td>
<td>Fajar Setiawan Roekminto</td>
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<td>Theoretical exploration</td>
<td>Methodology in the digital literature research</td>
<td>Post-modernism</td>
<td>Sastra dalam Masyarakat ter-multimedia-kan</td>
<td>Faruk</td>
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<td>Content analysis and</td>
<td>Digital literature characters</td>
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<td>Karakteristik Cerpen-cerpen Cyber</td>
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<th>_characters of digital literature</th>
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<td>Phenomenology</td>
<td>Sastra Cyber: Penelajahan Awal terhadap Sastra di Internet</td>
<td>Faruk HT</td>
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<td>Close reading</td>
<td>Karya Sastra sebagai Taman Berman</td>
<td>Katrin Bandel</td>
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<td>Sociology</td>
<td>Kajian reproduksi puisi digital pada antologi puisi digital Cyberpuitika</td>
<td>Cunong Nunuk Suraja</td>
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<td>Close reading and content analysis</td>
<td>'CYBERPRAM' Perceptions of Pramoedya Ananta Toer On the Internet</td>
<td>Arndt Graf</td>
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<td>The emergence of digital literature as new phenomena</td>
<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Sastra Cyber: Alternatif Kommunikasi</td>
<td>Arif Hidayat</td>
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<td>Descriptive</td>
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<td>Yeni Muliani Supriatin</td>
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<td>Community analysis</td>
<td>The emergence of digital literary community</td>
<td>Descriptive phenomenologic</td>
<td>Melampaui Masa Lalu, Mencipta Masa Depan: Gerak Komunitas Fiksimini</td>
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<td>Descriptive</td>
<td>Sastra Digital dan Penyebaran Sastra Indonesia melalui Industri Kreatif</td>
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<td>Descriptive sociologic</td>
<td>Realitas Sosial dan Representasi Fiksimini dalam tinjauan Sosiologi Sastra</td>
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What emerges from the five simple elements in the table above has their own different differences. First, the theme of the elements there are five groups of works that have different themes seen from the material discussed in his work and the dominant issues discussed. In the first theme, which is "polemic on the existence of digital literature", the issue of debate is the focus of several academic works on digital literature. The majority of academic works focus on the discussion of the pros and cons of digital literature. Musthofa Kamal's article titled "Critical Study of the Existence of Cyber Literature", for example. This work discusses the crowd who welcomed the presence of digital literary forms with others who questioned the content and ethics issues in writing literary works. The author is of the view that despite the polemic, digital literature has given a new color in the history of Indonesian literature where the questionable code of ethics is expected to form itself in the future [13]. Slightly shifted the focus of the discussion but still in debate or polemic, a study entitled "The Need and Possibility of Literature on the Internet" by Fajar Setiawan Roekminto explores the presence of cybersastra.net as a pioneer of digital literature in 1999. The article believes that the presence of literature on the Internet is still limited to alternative media and a substitute for print media which is usually dominated by popular names. Implicitly this paper also sees a kind of resistance movement over the dominance of certain literatures in newspapers or other print media. The same style was also expressed in a work titled "Cyber Literature in Indonesia" by Lailly Fitriani who saw the presence of digital literature as an inclusive form, more down to earth among all levels of writers, especially novice writers. Although discussing briefly about the debate over the problem of the quality of digital literature, Fitriani argues that the form of digital literature has presented a new space for writers who have always been marginalized. In general, the three academic works do not explicitly mention the approach used in examining the problem of debate in the form, ethics, and quality of the work. However, it can be assumed that the three of them used a descriptive approach in deciphering the subject matter.

Second, the theoretical exploration theme of digital literature raises a strategic issue, namely the methodological problem in digital literature research. As far as searching through some of the sources that we have mentioned before, there is only one academic study in this category, namely "Literature in Society (ter-) Multimedia (-kan): Theoretical, Methodological, and Educational Educational Implications" by Faruk. This study is a speech for the achievement of a professor's academic degree. Faruk saw that the phenomenon that emerged during the last decade in Indonesia had led to a new sensibility in the world of literature as well as the emergence of digital literature. By accommodating postmodern perspectives who see works that try to move beyond space, Faruk touches on the problem of the urgency of methodological exploration of works that move beyond space and has a new sensibility.

Third, there are several academic works that can be categorized in the theme of "content analysis and character of digital literature." This theme is dominant among other themes because the majority of works can be classified here. This can be checked in the work entitled "Characteristics of Cyber Short Stories" by Kusmarwanti who examined the plot, characters, and settings in short stories published in the old www.kolomkita.com and www.kemudian.com in 2008. According to him, the weakness of the form of cyber short stories there is the completion of the story, the cultivation of conflict, and the achievement of a climax. Also, the cultivation of characters, settings, and writing completion is not optimal. In contrast to Kusmarwanti, Encik Savira Isnah in "The Mechanics of Digital Poetry in Anthology of Cyberpuitika Digital Poetry" makes the conclusion that APDC digital poetry has the same quality as printed poetry such as emotions, imagination and thoughts from the experience of poets. More than that, APDC contains visual elements namely typography and line layout with facilitation of animation, sound, and color. The same study on APDC had previously been carried out by Cunong Nunuk Suraja entitled "Study of Digital Poetry Reproduction at APDC." In more detail, Suraja examined her reproduction by looking at collaborations between poetry and painting, music, and photographs.

As for several other studies trying to explore the digital elements that exist both in digital literary groups, digital poetry
forms and responses to digitized literary works. Here the writings of Faruk and Katrin Bandel are very suitable to be classified in the third theme of academic papers for the study of digital literature. Faruk's article titled "Cyber Literature: Early Exploration of Literature on the Internet" presents a detailed study of the literary community on www.cybersastra.net from the perspective of visitors or guests divided into 3 aspects namely guest identity, their language, and the contents of comments. Faruk's work also examined six names of poets by examining their poems. Meanwhile, Katrin recalcitrant in his article titled "Literary Work as a Playground" is more focused on the issue of online commentary on a literary work that is an interactive discussion forum on the homepage of www.truedee.com, an independent publisher owned by novelist Dewi Lestari. How to recalcitrant review of the reception of literary works is not much done by literary research in Indonesia, especially in the study of digital literature. Here Bandel shows how a certain character or character in the novel gets out of the author's control and acts alone without control anymore.

The case of receptions of literary works through digital media is an alternative so that readers of literature books are not bored and stiff, they can even - according to Bandel - become a place to play freely, a playground. Identical to literary receptions in digital media, Arndt Graf's work titled "Cyberpram: Perceptions of Pramoedya Ananta Toer on the Internet" examines various perceptions of Pram's work in Indonesian and English versions and responses from various nations. According to him, most receptions are in the English version as taken in Google.

Fourth, academic studies are classified as the emergence of digital literature. There are two academic works. Arif Hidayat's writing titled "Cyber Literature: Alternative communication" and Yeni Muliani Supriatin entitled "Cyber Literary Criticism". The first author reviewed the role of cyber literature by showing both positive and negative impacts. The second author describes the style of criticism, the age of the writer in cyberspace, literature, and his belief in technological developments whose benefits depend on its users.

Fifth, the theme of analysis of the digital literature community has the issue of the emergence of digital literature groups. two academic works made Fiksimini an example of a case while another took a sample of sastradigital.com. In a work entitled "Beyond the Past, Creating the Future: Fiksimini Community Movement", Rokib simply described a new phenomenon in the size of a fiction that is only 140 characters maximum as the fictional group. This trend is considered to be the cause of the new tendency of literary media through tweeters. While training Kartikasari et al approached Fiksimini with a sociological perspective in which the phenomenon was seen as a representation of social change and social reality that occurred in Indonesian society today. As for Cecep Syamsul Hari, through an article entitled "Digital Literature and the Spreading of Indonesian Literature through Creative Industries", describes the phenomenon of digital literature which is then contained by the sastradigital.com page as a place for the publication of writers who want their works to be published digitally. He said this as part of the creative process that became part of the creative industry through independent publishing.

Of the five themes and issues raised in these academic articles, it will be quite apparent that the majority of studies describe social context issues outside the content of the work itself. Because of the nature of digital media that is not fixed on the text in a closed manner, it also allows openness to responses, lawsuits and debates, almost all studies of digital literature focus more on works from aspects outside the content structure of a work itself.

Based on the results that have been collected previously, academic studies on digital literature in Indonesia are classified not much done by scholars. When compared with the development of the production of digital literary works themselves, research on them is still very minimal and has not received proportional attention. This initial survey only found about less than twenty academic works as tracked through the methods presented above. Regarding non-academic works in the form of essays and freelance articles, it is deliberately not included here to limit the focus of the discussion, despite the fact that these works are very abundant, especially on blogs, social media accounts, and certain pages.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the selected academic works, quite clearly the dynamics that occur in the study of digital literature in Indonesia. Trends that emerge from many articles show five trends, namely polemics, methodological exploration, content and character analysis, emergence phenomena, and analysis of the digital literary community. Indeed, the nature of digital literature allows openness to responses, lawsuits and debates, almost all studies of digital literature focus more on the work from aspects outside the content structure of a work itself. The five trends that are summarized are actually still at the surface level that has not yet entered the problem, for example, friction of ideology in digital literary works or others.

While in terms of the approach used in the study, the majority still use descriptive and sociological perspectives. Quite interesting challenges actually lie in the appropriate methodology to examine the form and content of digital literary works so that it implies certain theories or approaches more specifically.

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